

TECH Fort Worth announces award finalists

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Emerging technology that can harness the power of the sun, reduce the potential of infectious diseases and improve auto recycling are among nine finalists for the 2013 TECH Fort Worth Impact Awards.

The awards are designed to increase awareness about entrepreneurial activity in North Texas and will be presented at a luncheon May 15 at Texas Christian University. The awards are granted to early-stage businesses commercializing innovative products or services that will have a significant impact on the environment, health care and on the community through improved education and increased safety and security.

The event also raises funds to support business incubation programs for technology-based entrepreneurs. TECH Fort Worth is a nonprofit technology incubator with offices at the James E. Guinn Complex in south Fort Worth and at the University of North Texas Health Science Center's Center for BioHealth.

"I can't wait for everyone to get to know these finalists and the great things they are working on for our benefit," said TECH Fort Worth Executive Director Darlene Ryan. "They have amazing stories – how they came up with their ideas and why they are working so hard, in the face of great odds, to get their products to market and make a difference in the lives of so many. It is very inspiring."

The keynote speaker for the luncheon will be Jasper Welch, the new chief executive officer for the National Business Incubation Association. Nearly 400 community leaders, entrepreneurs, technology advocates and potential investors from across North Texas are expected to attend.

The finalists were selected by three panels of judges from the 24 presenters during "Pitch Days" March 26-April 4. Pitch Day hosts were Sabre Holdings, the University of Texas at Arlington Research Institute and the UNT Health Science Center.

This year, for the first time, finalists also will have an opportunity to pitch to angel investors from Cowtown Angels, the North Texas Angel Network and other local investors on June 20.

"It is a great opportunity for technology startups to get in front of investors," said TECH Fort Worth Assistant Director Jorge Varela. "It is the first step in possibly getting angel funding."

The finalists in the community category are Create Labs, which has created a social network where users own the content instead of giving the ownership of their images, videos and posts to the social media service provider; Inception Lighting, creator of an outdoor-rated LED lighting system that boasts a 10-year UV package; and Student Success Academy, a virtual success-consulting agency that pairs high school students with top-tier college students for guidance in college, career and life.

In the energy and environment category, the finalists include AutoEvolve, whose goal is to improve processes in the auto recycling industry by applying the concepts of assembly plants to automotive dis-assembly. The results will be increased profitability and use of environmentally friendly methodology.

Another finalist is iLumi, a series of LED lights controlled wirelessly from a simple mobile app. iLumi offers more than a million hues, pays for itself in energy savings and provides an

advanced lighting control system that is as easy as screwing in a light bulb.

Rounding out the energy and environment category is Pulsar Energy, whose patented technology reduces electricity and heat and is targeted to bring solar energy into worldwide mainstream use.

Finalists in the health category include Applied Regenerative Technologies, which focuses on restoring nerve function after trauma, tumor resection or neurological disease. Its products are bio-engineered to control the regeneration of nerves and were developed by a coordinated effort between physicians and scientists to improve the clinical outcomes for hundreds of thousands of patients per year around the world.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, infectious diseases are the second-leading cause of deaths worldwide, contributing to 14.8 million deaths annually.

Another health finalist, eMist, has developed a method for applying disinfectants and anti-bacterial chemicals that very quickly reaches all surfaces, even under tables and beds, to reduce the potential of infectious diseases.

MedHab, also a finalist, has developed a patented, wearable medical device called StepRite that can measure body weight, pressure, gait, flexibility and thermal sensing of lower extremities using pressure sensing and accelerometer technology.

Sponsors of the TECH Fort Worth Impact Awards include Emergo, Boeing, the Fort Worth Business Press, University of North Texas Health Science Center, Sabre Holdings, Lockheed-Martin, Studios 121, Bank of Texas, Neeley School of Business at TCU, Texas Health Research & Education Institute, Venture Docs, HealthPoint Biotherapeutics, Whitley Penn, Charter Business and Whitaker Chalk Swindle & Schwartz.

Sponsorship, table and ticket information about the luncheon is at www.impactourworld.com.